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ABSTRACT

In December 1996, a peace accord ended 30 years of civil war in Guatemala, during which an estimated 200,000 people were killed and over 1 million were displaced. Most of the war's victims have been indigenous (Maya) Guatemalans--who make up about 65 percent of the population--and other supporters of economic and political reforms. In this book, seven young Guatemalan refugees in the United States and Canada tell their stories. These boys and girls are 13-18 years old and include legal and illegal immigrants, students and dropouts, Maya Indians and "ladinos" (culturally Hispanic persons), and permanent immigrants and those who plan to return to Guatemala. They speak about fleeing the war and entering a new country, learning English, educational experiences in Guatemala and the United States, work experiences, efforts to stay in touch with family members, family survival strategies, racism, personal interests, culture conflict, acculturation, and aspirations for further education and a better life. An introduction provides background on Guatemalan history and politics, the civil war, and the current situation. Includes a glossary, photographs, an index, and suggestions for further reading. (SV)

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